835 614 174 fear. (1) Thus the very number of violations would have gradually

1. Actually, no sanction is provided against marriages within an exogamous entity; everything lies in the opposition of parents and elders and in a habit which is almost innate.

made the practice customary. Powerless to stop it, the persons in authority, guardians of traditional morality, would have contented themselves with channeling the development and restricting it to a minimum by being lenient on the subject of extramarital relations in order to save the principle of exogamy. This explanatory hypothesis can find a little confirmation in the fact that at the very beginning of colonization when European influence was not felt as yet, there were isolated and very rare cases of marriage in opposition to the law of exogamy between members of groups which were only very distantly related but already practiced lonkâna. The exception then became the rule; and from then on the two groupings in question intermarried regularly and without hindrance, while other families remained under the ancient law. Thus there is the known case of Boyela village (Bakâala), which includes the Bokambɑ̂, Bembakɑ̂, Besɑ̂lɑ̂, and Bekɔ̂lama (extinct), all descendants of Ngonde and one wife; his union with another spouse gave rise to the Lilekɛ̂ and the Likongo, to whom Bongilɑ̂, a group related through marriage (likilo), is attached. These two groups of families could not intermarry, but they did engage in lonkâna. Around the time of the first arrival of the Whites, a member of the Bembakɑ̂ [100] family a certain Bonjɑ̂mbɑ̂ was impelled by an excessive love to violate the law of exogamy by taking Bolondɔ̂ of Lilekɛ̂ for his wife. As his love did not cool and the marriage proved stable, it was recognized and accepted as legitimate. Since then the two groups in question have each become exogamous.

835 754 2. Between close relatives

Incest between close relatives has no special name of its own. As a matter of fact, it never occurs as an outgrowth of passion. We

835 754 encounter it only in connection with magical practices and sorcery (botɛ́, plural betɛ́), for which it is the nsimbo, that is, the condition without which the betɛ́ would lack efficacy. If the nsimbo is not observed, the botɛ́ turns against its owner and, by a reversal of its effect (bosesengano), brings death to the latter. Therefore the interested parties submit to these degrading requirements despite their natural repugnance. Depending on the case, incest with the mother, the daughter, or the sister is required. The first of these eventualities is the most repugnant to our natives. Though it goes altogether against the grain to do so, the mother submits to this ignominy to save the life of her foolhardy and greedy son.

[184] The nsimbo of incest does not exist in all botɛ́. It even seems to have been absent from the betɛ́ which are ancient and purely Nkundɔ́. It is found primarily in the big modern betɛ́, which have been imported from other peoples or invented on the spot since colonization. (1)

1. See Kaptein, in Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 534.

Article VIII. Love Philters

832 The Nkundɔ́ are familiar with two love philters, the efɔ́ndɛ́ and the bontálá. Other modern betɛ́ may produce the same effect in part or secondarily. Here [101] we will only deal with the first two, which are "pure" and ancient love philters.

The love philters (botɛ́ w'ɛ̌langyá) serve to gain the heart of a young girl as much as to entice a married woman away from her husband.

1. Efɔ́ndɛ́

Efɔ́nde (1) is a common charm. Anyone can procure it from the

1. Efɔ́nde is often used as a synonym of elangyá in its sexual meaning.

maker in consideration of the appropriate payment, of course. Various kinds of efɔ́ndɛ́ exist, differing as to the ingredients used, the manner

especially very early in the morning at the crowing of the cock.(1)

1. The natives also use this means to call their children who long ago left for the "lowlands" and whose return they ardently desire.

If the one who is called does not return, the charm will take revenge either on her or on her lover, depending on the desire of the person operating it. Another intervention on his part is then required, however, and it varies according to the form used. Note that according to the native view it is impossible for the wife not to hear the call, no matter how far away she may be. If she does not return, it is because she is being obstinate and deserves to be punished.

The spirit of vengeance alone is involved in:

2) The ngondé. This charm comes from the Coquilhatville region or even further away. The word ngondé is the Lolíngá form of the Lonkundó word nkondé, which means "gavial." The teeth of this reptile actually play a part in its composition. It is used to punish any thief by death. Therefore it has been declared effective against anyone who tries to seduce the wife of another. It will cause the culprit's feet to swell and to open with pus. Like the above practices, this one has not yet crossed Momboyo.

Such usages like many others have therefore been recently introduced. Before the arrival of Europeans in these parts, only love philters were known. However, it is easily understandable that the Nkundó gladly and confidently received these new practices which are so useful -- in their opinion -- and operate in a domain of capital importance for which colonization has deprived them of their ancient sanctions and means of prevention. [417]

843 837 This law requiring a most strict fidelity lasts until the end of the bokeka for the husband, but until the weaning of the child for the wife. It is especially strict for the period of seclusion (see below, Article III, 3).

The violation of the essential stipulation of this interdict (-fénda bokeka) results either in the death of the woman during pregnancy and especially during seclusion or in the death of the child later on. [477]

A. If the woman dies during this period, the suspicion is placed a priori on her husband. The Nkundó say abfénda wălĭf, "he has transgressed against his wife." Unless he can prove his innocence through public actions, the judgment of a magician, or autopsy[sic].

If the woman has been the victim of a seducer, he is held responsible and must pay a large indemnity equivalent to the bride price that was paid for the deceased. If no other man is involved, the affair has no consequences.

843 763 754 845 953 In the past the combined autopsy and Caesarian section was always performed. It had a dual purpose: to remove the child and to examine the mother. If the operation revealed the existence of a "stomach" (líkundú), the deceased was of a noxious (líloka) nature or constitution and therefore caused the death of her child. If the child remained alive, it proved that he was of a magically superior nature and was able to resist the natural evil spells of his mother, which thus turned against their unwitting author. (1)

1. The Nkundó believe that only animals have a "stomach" (líkundú). If a human being has one, that is, if his viscera are large, curved, in compartments, in a word, abnormal, that person is an evildoer. He commits evil acts voluntarily or, most frequently, unknowingly. Some men with a líkundú can be recognized by the fact that they eat their nails, hair, etc. The Nkundó must certainly have observed relationships between this habit and a deformity of the stomach.

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845 from the others. They thus rank with the great notables of the past. [sic]

945 When the children grow up and become self-sufficient, all
554 the special regulations lose their force and they become like everybody else. Nothing distinguishes them from the rest in marriage, death, etc. No preference is shown for or against them. But their descendants will again produce twins.

845 Thus the Nkundó consider twins as extraordinary children, but they do not carry this view to extremes. They are pleased to receive two children at a time, although they believe that under such circumstances the pregnancy and delivery are more dangerous for the mother. That is why she is called boyéngwá since, despite the seriousness of the situation, she did not die. This epithet is also applied to the father and to the twins, probably for the same reason as well as because of their immunity with respect to prohibitions. If the twins are of different sexes, however, the mother is not as likely to be called boyéngwá, since she is likoka, "harmful." (1)

1. See above, Article II, 3.

945 It is apparent from the above description that twins are
789 considered to be somewhat tainted with magic. The existence of
754 this belief is confirmed by the prohibition against throwing anything (stone, palm kernel, etc.) onto their hut, the same prohibition applying to anyone who possesses a charm or practices sorcery or protective magic. In addition they possess a certain innate ability to cast a spell over the activities (hunting, fishing) of others. That is why persons who are afraid of being harmed by them smear themselves with kaolin in the same way as do such children and their parents. [505]

845 The Nkundó have had cases of triplets, but they are extremely rare. The youngest of the three is called Yɛ́ndembe, or Yɛ́ndende, or Yɛ́lele. The only special practice with reference to the youngest one is that he can never be ordered to do any work, be sent to carry a message, run any errand, etc., ásɔ́tswé ntómo.